

A CONTRIBUTION TOWARD A MONOGRAPH OF THE HOMOPTEROUS INSECTS OF THE FAMILY DELPHACIDÆ OF NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICA.

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INTRODUCTION.

The family Delphacidæ was until quite recently and, in fact, by some authors, is yet considered as a subfamily of the larger group Fulgoridæ. By most students now, however, it is separated from its near relatives as a distinct family, chiefly on account of the large, movable spur, or calcar, at the base of the posterior tibiæ.

The most noticeable characteristic of the group as a whole is its homogeneity in general aspect and appearance. There are a few characters which are constant enough in subgroups to serve as diagnostic characters, and there are others which are too variable to serve that purpose. Some of the latter have, however, been used by many of the previous students with the result that genera and species have multiplied beyond reason and confusion has more and more crept in. This latter fact has been realized more strongly as my work on the group has progressed, and it has at last become necessary to rearrange the classification of the genera to some extent in order to avoid much of the prevalent confusion.

At the suggestion of Prof. C. F. Baker, of Pomona College, Claremont, California, the task of working over several collections of specimens of this family and naming the species was undertaken some months ago. His own collection of over 2,000 specimens, together with the United States National Museum collection of a still larger number, many of which, also, had been collected by Professor Baker, were placed before me for study. My original purpose, of course, was to classify the specimens before me according to the then accepted basis of classification. Much of the material had already been named authentically or else placed in the genus or subfamily where it would naturally fall. In the United States National Museum material were some paratypes and cotypes.